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PATRICIO DELPECHE
VOID RIVALS
image
#11

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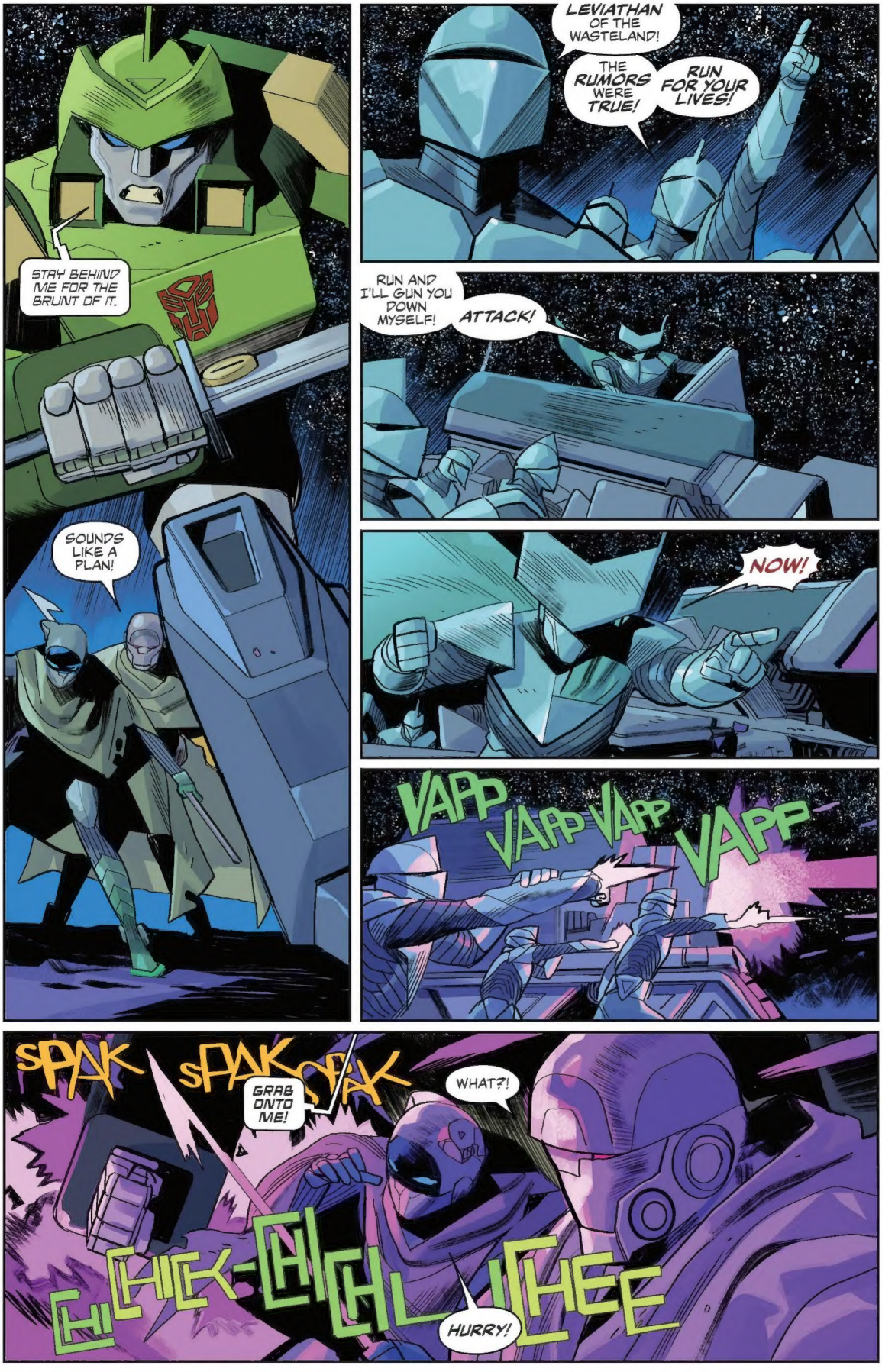
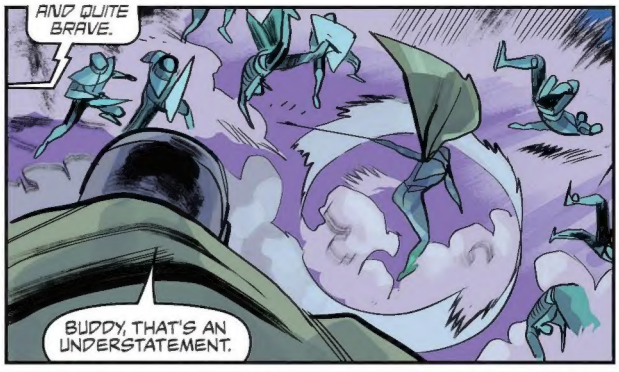

STAY BEHIND ME FOR THE BRUNT OF IT.
SOUNDS LIKE A PLAN!
LEVIATHAN OF THE WASTELAND!
THE RUMORS WERE TRUE!
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
RUN AND I'LL GUN YOU DOWN MYSELF!
ATTACK!
NOW!
VAPP VAPP VAPP VAPP
SPAK SPAK SPAK
GRAB ONTO ME!
WHAT?!
CHICK-CHICHL CHEE
HURRY!

DAMN IT! I CAN'T MAINTAIN LIFT FOR LONG WITH THIS GRAVITY--

NEITHER CAN THEY. THEIR BLASTWING FLEET IS USELESS.
THAT WAS PROBABLY THE SOUND OF THEM LANDING THAT DREW US OUT HERE.

THOSE TANKS ARE WORKING JUST FINE!
I'M LANDING BEFORE THEY SHOOT ME DOWN! I CAN AT LEAST PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US AND--

WOW.
OKAY. THAT ONE IS IMPATIENT!


AND QUITE BRAVE.
BUDDY, THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

ZZAPP
ZAPP
ZAPP
HOLD STILL!

SPAK
SPAK

YOUR MISSES ARE MY FAULT?
FORGIVE ME, BUT ARE YOU ANY GOOD AT THIS?

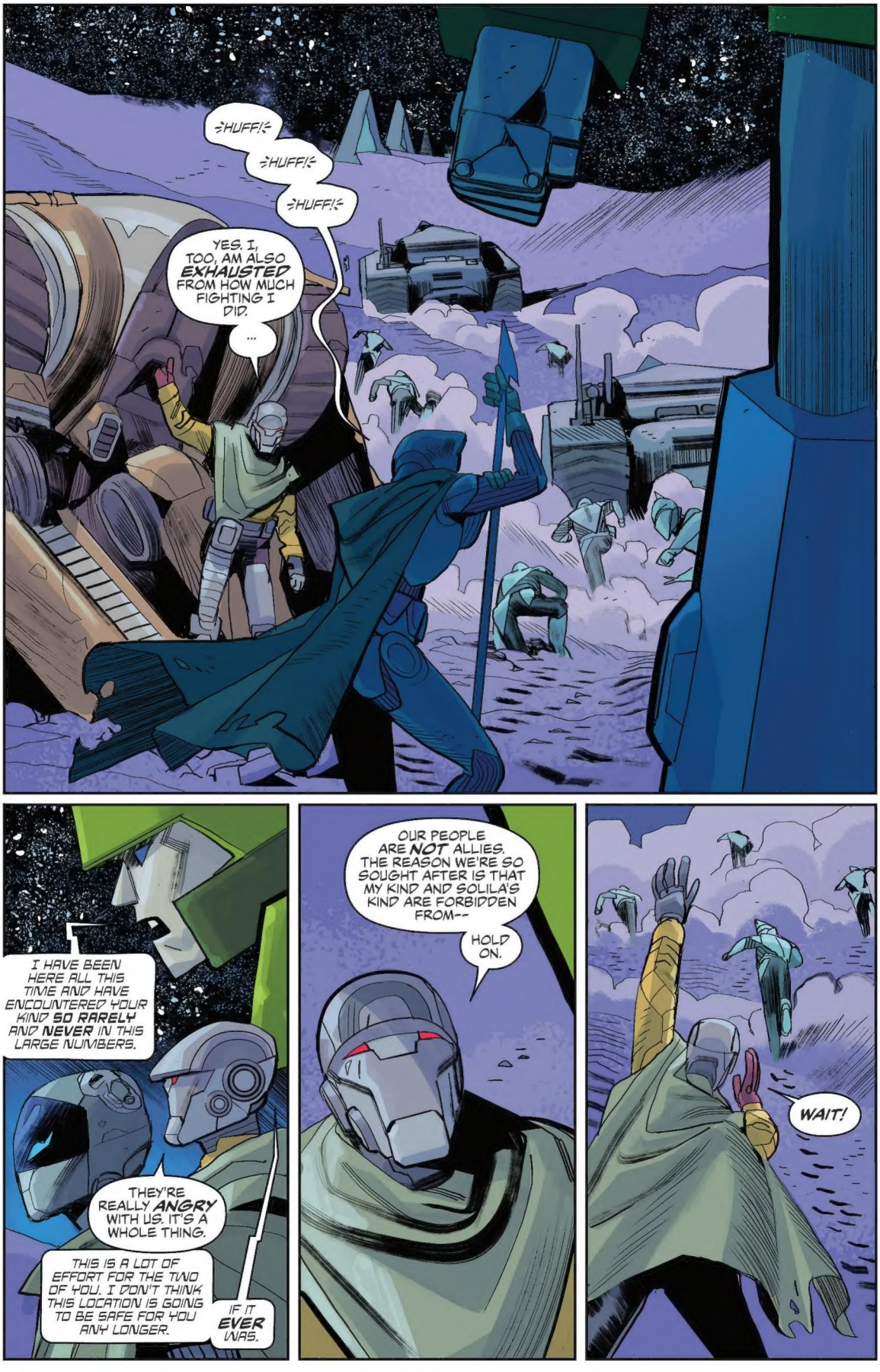
NO.
I'M A PILOT!
CHICK-CHEE
ZZAPP
ZAPP

THESE PEOPLE ARE PAWNS!
TRY NOT TO HARM THEM!
TALL ORDER, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST!
IT'D HELP IF I KNEW HOW DURABLE THESE GUYS ARE.
SWITCH HANDS. AT LEAST LET ME PROVIDE AIM ASSIST.
THIS BLASTER ISN'T GETTING THROUGH THEIR ARMOR WHEN IT DOES HIT!
THIS ISN'T GOING TO--
OH, MAN!
:GULP:

WRAK!
YOU KICKED A TANK! RAD!
VASSH
CAN YOU TRY TO HELP AT LEAST HALF AS MUCH AS HER?
WAIT! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
RUNNING AWAY IS A TERRIBLE IDEA!
SO THIS GUY IS A COWARD, TOO?
I WILL SAY, THAT IS ONE THING--
WRAK!
HE MOST CERTAINLY IS NOT!

IT STILL WORKS!
BARELY.
LOOK OUT!
CLOSE ONE!

GET A LOAD OF THIS!
KLANG
CRAP!
CRAP!
FINE. YOU WIN.
SYHUKK
OR REALLY...
WE WIN.

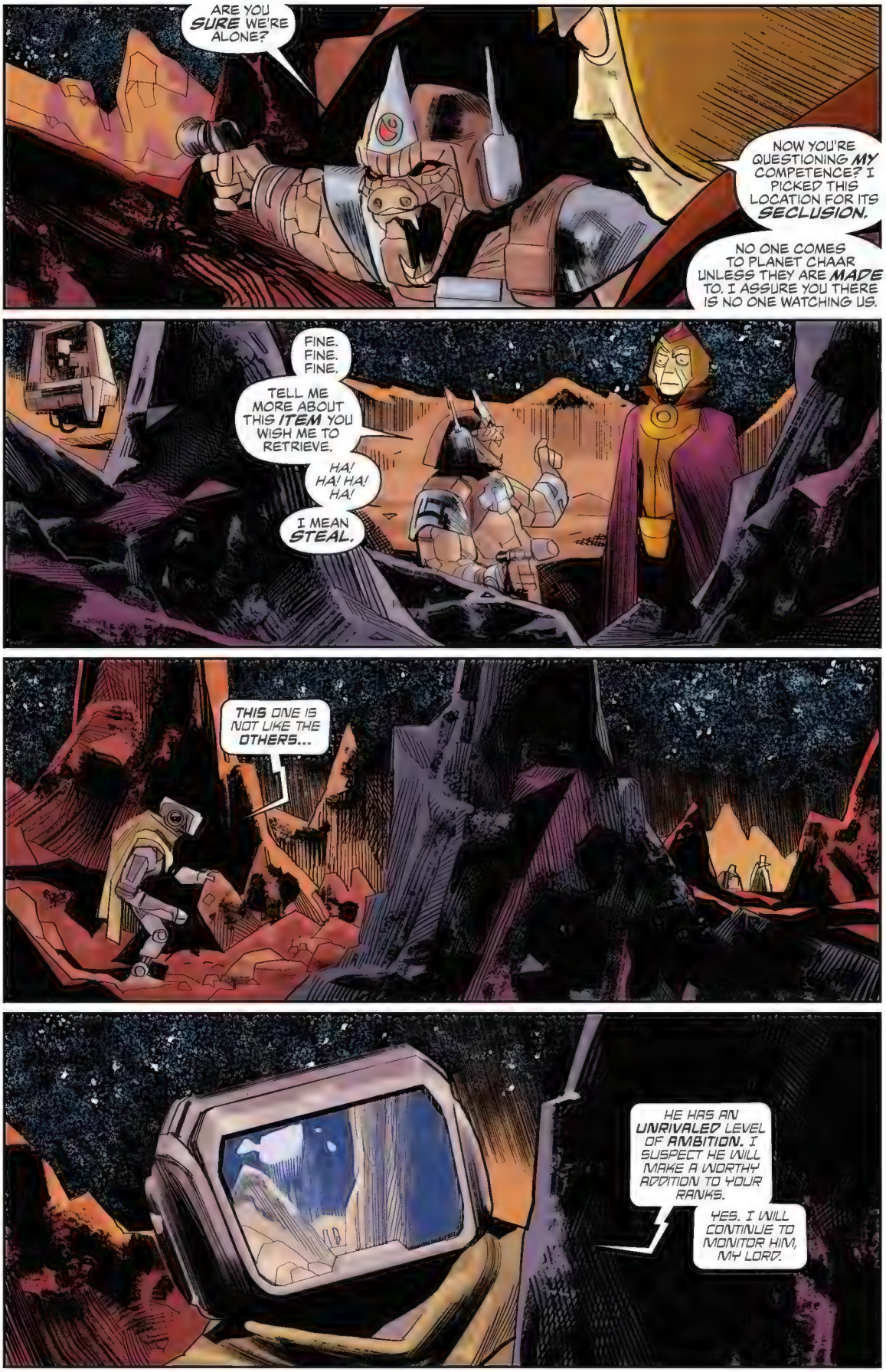

:HUFF!:
:HUFF!:
:HUFF!:
YES. I, TOO, AM ALSO EXHAUSTED FROM HOW MUCH FIGHTING I DID.
...
I HAVE BEEN HERE ALL THIS TIME AND HAVE ENCOUNTERED YOUR KIND SO RARELY AND NEVER IN THIS LARGE NUMBERS.
THEY'RE REALLY ANGRY WITH US. IT'S A WHOLE THING.
THIS IS A LOT OF EFFORT FOR THE TWO OF YOU. I DON'T THINK THIS LOCATION IS GOING TO BE SAFE FOR YOU ANY LONGER.
IF IT EVER WAS.
OUR PEOPLE ARE NOT ALLIES. THE REASON WE'RE SO SOUGHT AFTER IS THAT MY KIND AND SOLILA'S KIND ARE FORBIDDEN FROM--
HOLD ON.
WAIT!

...?
THAT ONE! TAKE HIM TO YOUR LAB.
EXPLAIN THE ENERGON TO HIM AND SHOW HIM HOW TO EXTRACT IT.
WHAT?
HIS PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING. THEY'RE STARVING.
"I'VE SEEN IT."
=AAAH!=
CALM DOWN. I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.
THIS IS EXTREMELY ILL-ADVISED. IT'S NOTHING SHORT OF TREASONOUS.
ADD IT TO THE LIST.

WHAT GAME ARE YOU PLAYING HERE?
NO GAME. HONEST.
JUST...
...TRYING TO DO THE RIGHT THING.
YOU'RE GIVING UP YOUR PEOPLE'S ADVANTAGE. THE AGORRIANS AREN'T SUFFERING THE SAME RESOURCE DRAIN AS MY PEOPLE.
WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO EVEN THE PLAYING FIELD?
YOUR PEOPLE, MY PEOPLE... HAVEN'T THINGS CHANGED FOR YOU, SOLILA?
EVER SINCE WE TOOK OUR HELMETS OFF AND SAW EACH OTHER FOR THE FIRST TIME, I'M SEEING THINGS DIFFERENTLY. BATTLING IT OUT WITH YOU OVER A WATER-RICH METEOR WAS OKAY WHEN WE WERE BITTER ENEMIES.
KNOWING THAT YOUR PEOPLE NOT GETTING THAT WATER LIKELY RESULTED IN ZERTONIAN DEATHS... IT HAUNTS ME.
WE KNOW WE'RE THE SAME NOW. FOR SOME REASON THAT'S A DEEP DARK SECRET THAT HAS YOUR PEOPLE AND MAYBE MINE WANTING US BOTH DEAD... BUT NOW THAT WE KNOW THE TRUTH...
SHOULDN'T WE ACT ACCORDINGLY?
THEY'RE NOT YOUR LIVES AND OUR LIVES ANY MORE.
THEY'RE JUST LIVES...
AND I WANT TO SAVE AS MANY OF THEM AS WE CAN.

I'M SORRY.
WHAT?
YOU'RE GOING TO KNOCK ME OUT AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?!
NO, I...
I PROMISE I'LL NEVER DO THAT AGAIN.
=OOP!=
THAT WAS QUICK.
I PROVIDED A DATA DRIVE WITH ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS THEY COULD POSSIBLY NEED. EVEN IF HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND IT, ONE OF YOUR SCIENTISTS CERTAINLY WILL.
...
YOU HAVE SCIENTISTS, RIGHT?

CHAAR.
CAN I DO IT? YOU ASK ME IF I CAN DO IT? WHY'D YOU HAVE ME COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE IF YOU WERE WORRIED I COULDN'T DO IT?
YOU DISAPPOINT ME, BOSCH.
THE QUESTION YOU SHOULD BE ASKING IS, "CAN I AFFORD IT?"
NO JOB IS TOO DANGEROUS IF THE PRICE IS RIGHT!
FAIR ENOUGH, SKUXXOID. YOUR POINT HAS BEEN MADE.
MONACUS IS A DANGEROUS PLACE, AND MY PRIZE IS CLOSELY GUARDED BY LORD GYCONI AND HIS MINIONS.
I'M NO STRANGER TO LORD--
WHAT?
WHAT IS IT?


ARE YOU SURE WE'RE ALONE?
NOW YOU'RE QUESTIONING MY COMPETENCE? I PICKED THIS LOCATION FOR ITS SECLUSION.
NO ONE COMES TO PLANET CHAAR UNLESS THEY ARE MADE TO. I ASSURE YOU THERE IS NO ONE WATCHING US.
FINE. FINE. FINE.
TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS ITEM YOU WISH ME TO RETRIEVE.
HA! HA! HA! HA!
I MEAN STEAL.
THIS ONE IS NOT LIKE THE OTHERS...
HE HAS AN UNRIVALED LEVEL OF AMBITION. I SUSPECT HE WILL MAKE A WORTHY ADDITION TO YOUR RANKS.
YES. I WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR HIM, MY LORD.

QUINTESSA.
IF THE UNSPOKEN ONE DID IN FACT STEAL THE TECHNOLOGY SHE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE STOLEN, THE POTENTIAL GAINS IF SHE IS LOCATED-- ARE IMMEASURABLE.
ACKNOWLEDGED. THE FACT REMAINS WE ARE BURNING PRECIOUS ENERGON WHILE ONE OF OUR FLAGSHIPS WANDERS AIMLESSLY IN THE COSMOS.
AIMLESSLY, BROTHERS?
"WE KNOW THIS IS THE SECTOR WHERE THE ALLOY WAS ACQUIRED.
"YOU NEED TO HAVE BUT A MODICUM OF FAITH. THIS WILL TAKE TIME, BUT IF OUR SUSPICIONS ARE CORRECT IT WILL BE WORTH IT."
CAPTAIN! THERE IS AN UNKNOWN VESSEL ENTERING THE REGION.
CLOAK THE SHIP, IMMEDIATELY!

WHOA! IS YOUR AGGRESSION LEVEL SET TOO HIGH?
THIS IS A TRAINING SESSION--NOT A FIGHT TO THE DEATH!
KLANK
AGGRESSION: MODERATE.
IF YOU SAY SO.
BEEP BEEP BEEP
SUSPEND PROGRAM.

OKAY, THIS IS THE SECTOR SKUXXOID RETRIEVED THE SHIP FROM... SO IF HE WASN'T LYING, I JUST NEED TO START SCANNING FOR A DECAYING ENERGY SIGNATURE FROM THE NEBULON TRANSPORT HE GAVE THEM IN TRADE.
AAAAAAND...
BEEP BEEP
HOLY CRAP. I GUESS I SCARED SKUXXOID MORE THAN I THOUGHT.
HE ACTUALLY TOLD ME THE TRUTH!
SETTING COURSE...
KLANG
I DIDN'T RESUME PROGRAM!!
TRACK THAT SHIP.
ITS ARRIVAL HERE AND RAPID DEPARTURE CAN BE NO COINCIDENCE.

"WE... HAVE URGENT BUSINESS, SPRINGER."
WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO MAKE IT TO THE AGORRIAN BORDER ON OUR OWN. WE WERE HOPING YOU COULD TRANSPORT US THERE... LIKE YOU DID ME, YEARS AGO.
THAT WAS YOU?
WOW.
I WAS HALF DEAD. I DIDN'T BELIEVE WHAT LITTLE I REMEMBERED UNTIL I ENCOUNTERED JETFIRE.
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THAT FOR SURE. I MEAN, I WAS GOING TO HELP YOU ANYWAY, BUT YOU CAN TELL THAT STORY ON THE WAY.
GREAT!
AT THE RISK OF PUSHING MY LUCK, CAN WE GET ONE OF THOSE DATA PADS FOR MY PEOPLE, AS WELL?
CERTAINLY.
SO... UM... WHILE WE WAIT...
ANY CHANCE YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT THE GLOWING GREEN KEY HIDDEN IN YOUR BELT?

I ASKED NICELY! AND-- YOU PROMISED!
...
SORRY.
I'M VERY SORRY.
I'M AFRAID THIS IS WHERE WE MUST PART WAYS.

TALK TO THE HANDROID

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO VOIDRIVALS@SKYBOUND.COM

Solila, say it ain't so! Why are you breaking up the band?! Phew, what a gut punch for the penultimate issue of the arc! Welcome back to "Talk to the Handroid" with your co-hosts Ben Abernathy and Robert Kirkman!

Hey! That's ME! My text is different somehow, in a way I'm not currently aware of. So if anything controversial or upsetting is said in that other text, just keep in mind it's everyone's favorite editor Ben Abernathy!

How excited are we now that we're one year into the ENERGON UNIVERSE?! Can you believe it's been a year already! Time is just flying by so that must mean we're having loads of fun. Not to brag but the EU has been a roaring success with each book selling better than the last and our flagship title Transformers is constantly trading places with Batman and Spider-Man for the top selling book in the entire industry. How insane is that? With VOID RIVALS issue 1 on the cusp of its historic 10th printing I can safely say it's the most successful series launch I've ever had. And here we are at issue 11 still burning up the sales charts... this is all a build up to THANK YOU!

We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for you. We really appreciate the readers supporting this series and the line as a whole, or anyone who is just reading this series (although you should at least give the other series a try, trust us!). We especially appreciate anyone who is reading these words, and anyone who has written in. We love doing letters columns and having an official channel for feedback and interaction with the fans and we can't do that without you. So keep those letters flowing!

Speaking of letters... let's dive into the ol' mailbag and see what's what.

. . . . . .

Handroid,

Some praise from a new comic book reader here:

Today is Friday. On Monday I bought a comic book for the first time in my adult life. Married, in my thirties and with a 5 year old, I was looking for a new hobby that doesn't involve a screen. So I stopped at the LCS, browsed, and picked up Transformers #1 3 (the covers looked so cool). On Tuesday, I went back and scooped up Duke #1 4 (I had the G.I. Joe Micro Machines in the 90s). I read about the EU and decided to give Void Rivals a shot. I'm still new at this and I wasn't sure if scanning pages in a book at the store is a faux pas or something.. So I snagged books #1-8, sight unseen, because I was so darn impressed with TF and Duke. I just blew through Void Rivals #1 8 this afternoon and I am absolutely hooked! That motorcycle escape scene... awesome! I made a subscription at my LCS for everything EU. Thanks for such a top notch product that has made a comic book fan out of me.

Can we expect more limited G.I. Joe series after Scarlett and Destro and will there be a long running Joe comic in the EU? Can we get a Shipwreck origin series that involves him messing up some cartel maritime drug smuggling or something? Also, the Proximus action figure is begging to be made by Hasbro Pulse.

Can't wait for what comes next!

Tony

CLASSIFICATION: DOUBLE SECRET//EU VR//REL TO HANDROID

This letter made my day, Tony! SO thrilled you discovered the Energon Universe because of cool covers on TRANSFORMERS. I always believe that if you can hook the eye of a consumer with a killer cover and then deliver a good read, you can land a fan. It worked! Interestingly, you're not the first person to ask for a Shipwreck series hmmm...

This really is the best kind of letter. News of more people discovering this art form is always the greatest. It's awesome to hear that the Energon Universe is hooking people in. Now that you've got a solid base of comics never hesitate to try new things. Might I recommend anything else with a Skybound logo on it?

. . . . . .

Being a big fan of Kirkman's work, I ordered Void Rivals from my local comic shop, Stargazers in Tacoma, WA, long before the cat was out of the bag about the EU. As secrets leaked, being a big fan of G.I. Joe, I was primarily excited

for any potential connections. But I soon realized that this isn't a cheap brand-connecting gimmick. Instead, you've created an intricate, unique world, that more than stands on its own two feet

It's been a lot of fun seeing Void Rivals develop right here in Delepeche's electric colors, twenty ad free pages at a time.

Thank you to the whole team. Keep up the great work.

PS- I can't wait to learn more about the lonely Skuxxoid in issue 9. Will we see more of him? I certainly hope so.

Joe Renckly

Thanks for writing in, Joe, and glad you're digging the series... and thanks for giving Patricio a shout out, he's doing some amazing work on this second arc... such a talent!

SKUXXOID!! At this point, don't worry, he's a regular part of this book as far as I'm concerned. Honestly, I have trouble not turning this into a Skuxxoid series. It's... a... constant battle. Is it time for a third regular monthly series? Is the world ready for Skuxxoid monthly? Is that possibly more in-demand than a Shipwreck series? Maybe? Maybe? We'll just have to see!

. . . . . .

Hello Void Rivals team,

I FINALLY caught up with this series with issue 9 and I absolutely love it When I hopped into the Energon universe, I only planned on reading Transformers but as I've continued to read it, it's made me want to read the other series alongside it and I finally decided to do so. I am thankful that I came to such a decision because I LOVE Void Rivals. I hate that it took me so long to finally get into this series. Both Darak and Solila are very likable and they bounce off of each other very well. Once you mix in Handroid and all of the other wacky characters in this series, the main characters really shine and bounce off of the world around them very well. Also, this series is constantly taking unexpected turns that I can't wait to see pan out. I also really like how this series has incorporated the Transformers so far and I am excited to see where things go with Springer. I wanted to mention that I thought it was pretty funny that y'all mentioned in issue 2 that the characters were designed to be humanoids that appear as robots. Before I started reading this series, I assumed they were robots! The callback to that in this issue was funny as well with Springer assuming they were mechanical. Was there a specific reason that y'all wanted them to be humanoids that came across as robots? Anyways, can't wait to read more next month Now to get caught up on all of the G.I. Joe stuff.
Cason Jones

By all means, Cason! Get on that G.I. Joe train! What Josh Williamson and crew are cooking up on that side of the EU is great and you'll love it as much as you loved everything else so far!

As for the characters seeming like robots, I just like adding as much mystery and intrigue as possible. I think comics are at their best when almost every page turn is revealing something, no matter how minor, so the more opportunities for surprises the better. Any time you can make a reader think one thing, it gives you a chance to reveal the other. AND I think it's really cool that in Transformers lore a ton of civilizations are artificial in nature. I think that's really fascinating.

. . . . . .

Howdy fellas!

I'm fairly new to the TF franchise as a whole, and the Energon Universe is my introduction to the comic books side of things.

It's crazy how Void Rivals and TF will make me feel empathy for the most random characters. I don't think an issue has passed without me tearing up. I mean, how do you make someone cry for Skuxxoid? You guys are insane!

I've been avoiding even cover art spoilers, so seeing Springer up front and center on the last issue had me jumping for joy. I've really loved the presence of the Wreckers across VR and TF. I have my fingers double triple-quadruple crossed that--with the Quintessons and the Wreckers kicking about- we might just get to see some dearly beloved Junkions later, too. Is it too bold for me to ask? Do we get to see them? It's been so long.. don't tell me actually, I'm too nervous to know the answer.

Keep on keepin' on
  Joey

I'll have to give credit where credit is due on the "insane" compliment-that's all Robert!

Thanks, guys. I'll add that whatever I put in my script either lives or dies on how Lorenzo brings it to life. The emotion present in Skuxxoid that's bringing out those feelings, that's all Lorenzo's magic.

Junkions, huh? That's a good idea...

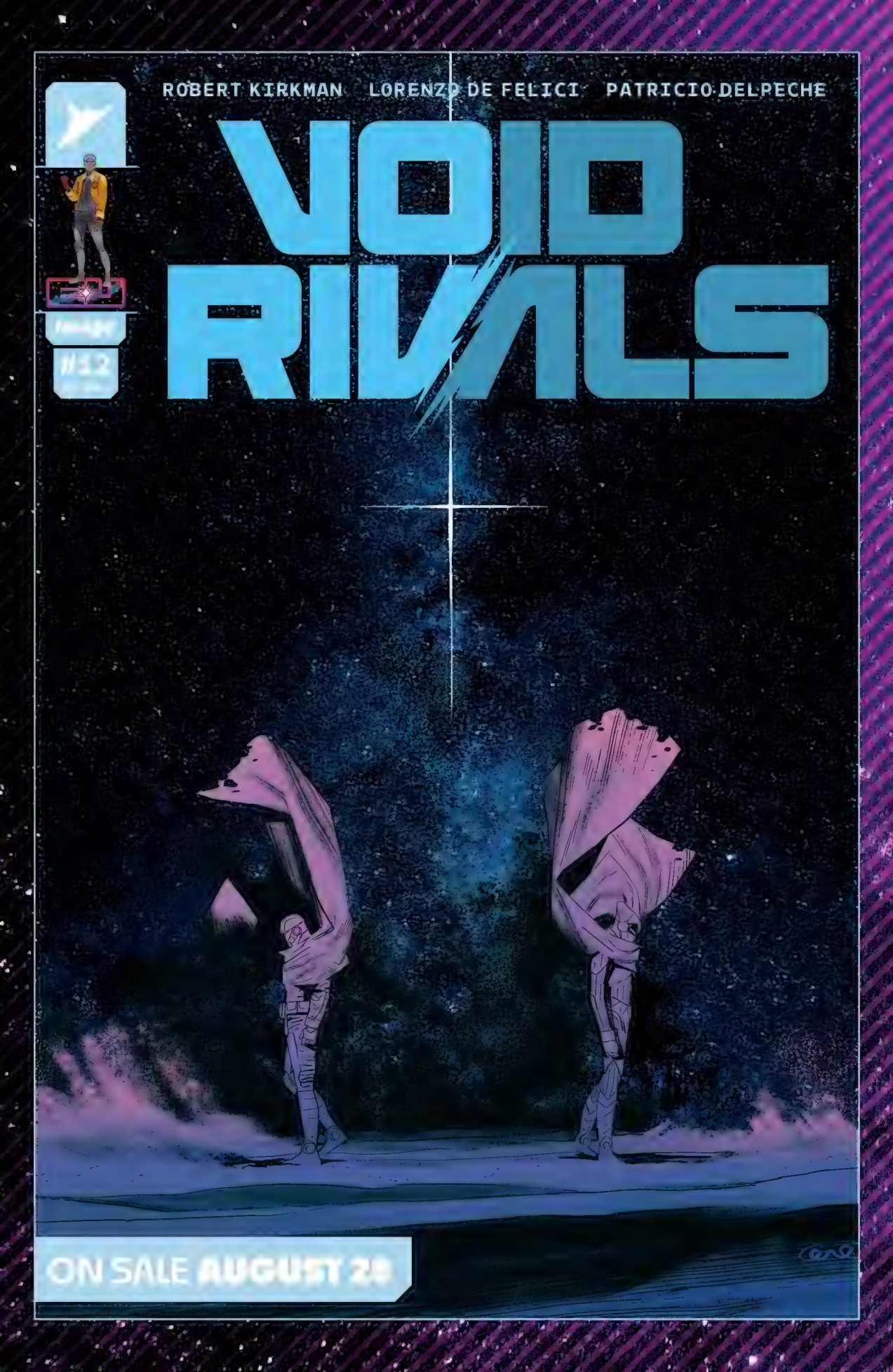
. . . . . .

Thanks for all the great letters-PLEASE continue to write in, we love hearing from you... see ya in a month!

-Ben Abernathy

I'll see you all back here next month for the end of arc 2 as we'll reveal... well... you'll just have to wait and see! Meet back here in one short month!

-Robert Kirkman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#12
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DESTRO
ON SALE AUGUST 21

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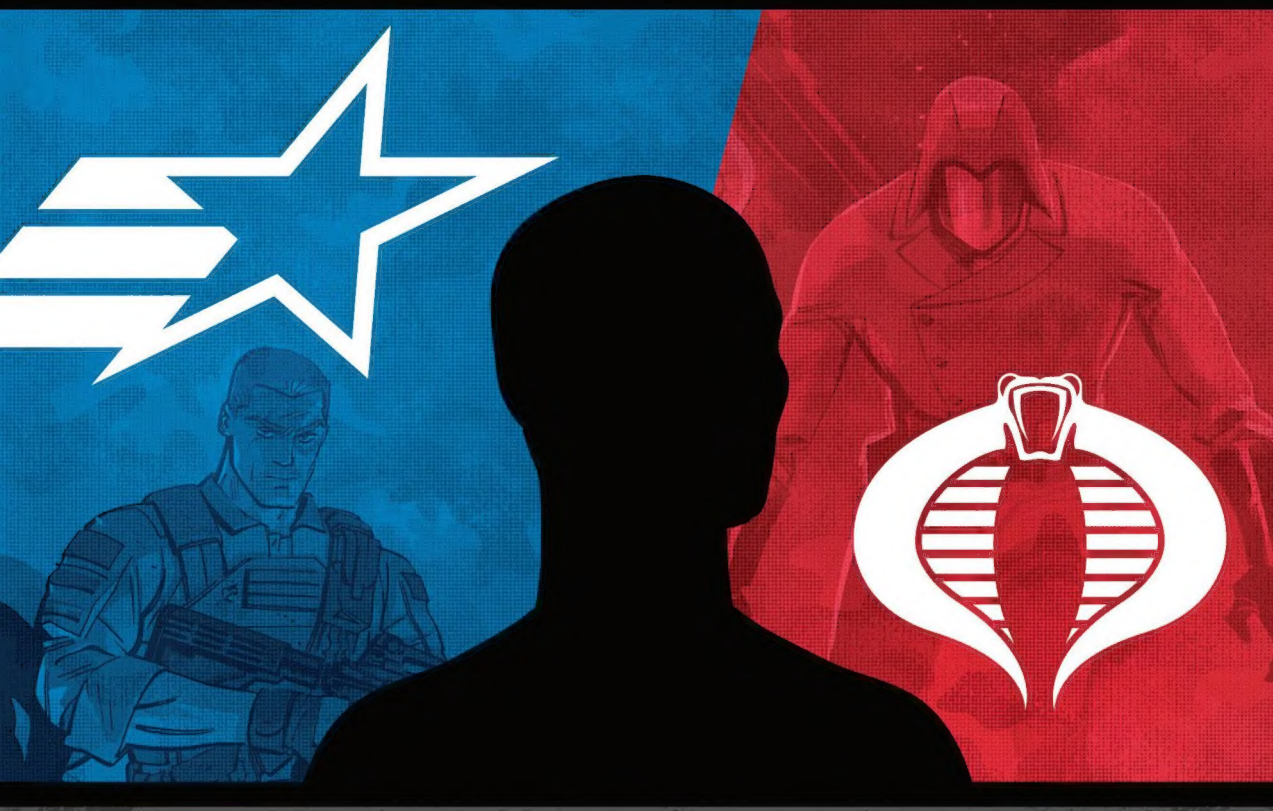

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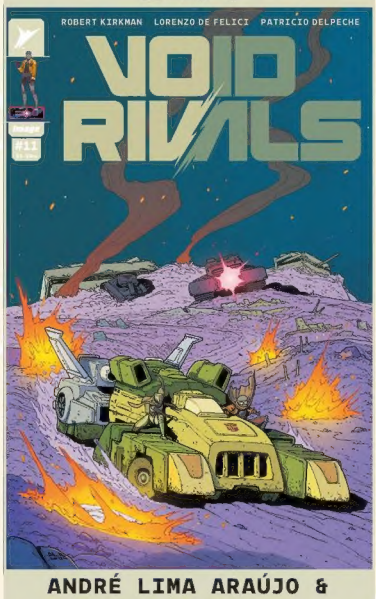

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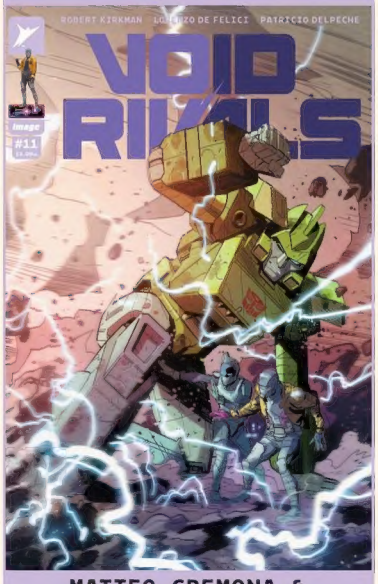

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